

NEW  
SERIES

OCTOBER

VOL.  
6

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM  
YEAR TO YEAR

# All the Year Round

a  
Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS, JUN.

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

HOUSEHOLD WORDS

PART 35.

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1871

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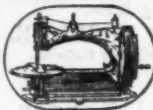
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No. 149. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7, 1871.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

## CASTAWAY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "WRECKED IN  
FORT," &c. &c.

### BOOK II.

#### CHAPTER III. THE GENERAL MANAGER.

TEN o'clock in the morning, and the sun shining with all his might. He has been "at this game," as one of the conductors of the innumerable omnibuses slowly travelling across Westminster Bridge remarks, looking upwards and shaking his head in a deprecating manner, for the last three months. During that time scarcely a drop of rain has fallen, the days have been blazing and the nights stifling, and the drought tremendous. From the country come dire rumours of burnt-up crops and dying cattle, while, in the poorer neighbourhoods of town, the water, always dealt out, owing to the admirable municipal arrangements, with a niggard hand, is now so scarce that parochial doctors are beginning to shake their heads in alarm, and letters, advocating inquiry and sanitary reform, are cropping up in the various newspapers.

There is no mistake at all about the intensity of the heat. You can tell it from the smell of the river, now by the various passing steam-boats churned into a tide of feculent mud, now lazily ebbing, now as lazily flowing, but always filthy, loathsome, and pestiferous. You would have seen signs of its power had you been present, eight hours ago, amongst the senators, in the feeble tones and languid manner of the jaded statesman, weary of his speeches and of himself, and in the dull, despairing apathy of the few members left to listen to him. You can trace its effects in the extra sodden and pallid faces of the clerks lining the knife-boards of the City-bound omni-

buses, men whose ordinarily dull and dreary lives, spent in low-ceilinged, gas-lit offices, have this year been rendered more than ordinarily horrible by the intense heat within, and the knowledge of the perpetual sunshine without, and who are almost goaded to desperation at the thought that the fine weather might break up suddenly, before their annual fortnight's holiday was obtainable.

Heat, tremendous heat, everywhere! The narrow-chested, long-ribbed horses in the cabs and omnibuses, carry even less flesh than usual, and under the heavy loads which they have to drag, suffer so much as even to excite the pity of their drivers, who, in their turn, have relinquished their normal clothing, and even in straw hats and shirt-sleeves are too much influenced by the weather to beat their cattle or swear at their comrades. Heedless of the minatory glances of the policemen on duty, heedless even of the crisp mandates by which these glances are occasionally followed, the itinerant vendors of fruit and cheap effervescent drinks stop their barrows by the side of the footway, and speedily are surrounded by clamorous customers. One of these, pushing his long tray before him, and with his head turned over his shoulder, not looking where he went, strolled quietly across the road, taking no notice of the approach of an aristocratic brougham which was bearing down upon him. The fruit in the tray was West Indian pine-apple, cut into luscious, sticky slices, and over them hung a painted canvas banner, representing several West Indians, very black and very shiny, gathering and eating the fruit in great enjoyment. The whole thing was common and vulgar, and cheap and low, and as the horse in the brougham was an aristocratic horse, he shied at it;

and as the coachman was a fat, well-paid varlet, aping the manners of his superiors, he swore at it, and there was a general row, ending as usual in mob and policeman.

The latter had already assumed an appearance of portentous judicial wisdom, a condition to which his wooden cast of countenance helped him not a little, and had produced his note-book, when a voice from within the brougham told him to go to the devil, and bade the coachman drive on. At this unexpected interference with his dignity, the policeman, highly incensed, pocketed his note-book, and leaving the horse's head, walked round to the brougham door with the intention of remonstrating; but after glancing through the window, he merely smiled a stolid smile, touched his helmet with his stiff forefinger, and motioning to the coachman, stood watching the carriage as it rolled easily away.

What the policeman saw when he looked in at the carriage window was the figure of a tall, handsome man, with bright black eyes and sound pearly teeth, which gleamed as he smiled in recognition of the official's salute, an aquiline nose, and a close-cut black beard. His appearance generally was magnificent; his dark hair, the ends of which were just beginning to be touched with grey, was surmounted by a very glossy curly-brimmed hat. He wore a white waistcoat, with a massive gold chain across it, at one end of which swung various golden charms; an open shirt-front, with plain gold studs, and a flaming red necktie, a blue frock-coat, with a velvet collar, and light trousers. He had varnished boots on his feet, and lavender kid gloves on his hands, and was smoking a cigar, a trifle under half a foot in length. He was altogether gorgeous, and his name was Philip Vane.

Whence this transfiguration? In former days Philip Vane, even doing the best for himself, as he was always in the habit of doing, without caring who might suffer, was lean and hungry-looking. Strive as he might to disguise it, there had always been a certain look of eagerness and anxiety about his eyes; now he was stout, radiant, joyous. Gone, too, was every trace of the turf and its associations; gone were the sporting cut of the coat, the tight trousers, the spotted necktie, the horse-shoe pin. The air of nonchalant languor was replaced by a brisk, sharp manner, sometimes genial, sometimes determined, but always business-like. Things of the past were the attendance at Tattersall's, the consultation of

sporting oracles, the league with jockeys, touts, and tipsters; scarcely more than a reminiscence now was the apartment for "club gentlemen;" and the major—no longer major—in discarding his military prefix, had dropped with it nearly all the associations of his former life. How had this come about? Philip Vane had "gone into the City."

Just about that time many men went into the City, who had never previously crossed the boundary of Temple Bar. Scores of them, legions of them; princes of the blood, and peers of the realm; dignitaries of the church, and mighty men of valour, holding high positions in the army and navy; young men just beginning life, and old men from whom life had almost retired; struggling government clerks, and opulent tradesmen; artists with the pencil, and artists with the pen, seeking for a short cut to fortune, if not to fame; clergymen, who inveighed against the sin of greed from their pulpits on the Sunday, and haggled with shares during the week; and petty shop-keepers: all these went into the City, most of them in person, swarming down upon the stronghold of the brokers, and the jobbers, and the agents on 'Change; questioning, criticising, pleading, begging, buying, bargaining, chaffering; some keeping aloof themselves, and only lending their noble names as directors of boards of management, but all with one and the same idea, the allotment of shares in the companies which were springing up by dozens daily, the immediate sale of these shares at high premium, and hence the speedy fabrication of fortune.

Daily and nightly, for the nights were far too precious to be wasted, did those on whom the concoction of these various schemes devolved, grind, and slave, and labour, in giving to their aerial fabrics a semblance of stability, and an appearance of reality. These gentry were a new brood, a species never before seen, even on the chequered surface of City life. Formerly, even in the wildest days of speculative madness, scarcely a scheme had been broached, with any reasonable hope of support, which had not something, however small, of a basis and a foundation. In those days, no matter what the nature of the transaction, men going in for City speculation took shares in a company, and held or sold them, and were rich or ruined, as the case might be. But in these latter days there sprang into existence men, who made their money by simply working the

lever by which the various companies were started, or "floated" them, to use the more correct term, and who, of necessity, had no other connexion with the concern (save, indeed, when they knew its value, and chose to hold by it) than the certain number of shares paid to them as part of their hire money, which they disposed of at the first convenient opportunity. "Promoters" they were called, and the profession being a lucrative one, and requiring neither capital nor certificates of character, soon found many followers. Men who had been, as they themselves described it, "knocking about doing nothing;" men who had been doing worse than nothing; the morally halt, maimed, and blind; men who, having been long since given over by their friends, had been morally dead for years—all these suddenly reappeared, holding commissions in the great promoting army. Some fell out of the ranks at once, and died by the wayside—the pace was too good for them; others as immediately struggled into brevet rank, and held their own, and more than their own—other people's. Of this last number was Philip Vane.

Sharp, shrewd, and unscrupulous, ready-witted and prompt to act, with a good address, a pleasing presence, and fascinating manners, Philip Vane was just the man for a "promoter," and in that capacity his services were in requisition by half a dozen different persons who knew his value, at the outbreak of the mania. Experience, however, soon taught him that in such matters genius diffused is wasted, and he speedily determined to concentrate his energies on such schemes only as were submitted to him by the one man alone in whose worldly sagacity he had implicit belief. That man was Mr. Delabole.

In long-headedness and foresight, in what is now called "financing," Mr. Delabole had few equals, and no superior. Philip Vane was brighter and smarter, better educated, and more calculated to inspire confidence among the young, who now-a-days are by no means the most ready to confide, and possessing those very qualifications, the absence of which had always militated against Mr. Delabole's social success, a decent appearance, and the manner of a man of the world.

Mr. Delabole had, however, that which Philip Vane had never possessed, the command of money, and a reputation, not merely for wealth, but for luck in speculating, which served his purpose wonderfully at that particular crisis. Moreover, he was

sufficiently acquainted with commercial matters, and sufficiently mixed up with the City world, to be able to float any affair which he might undertake, with the aid of a few chosen friends, and without having to invoke the assistance of any of the outside world, who would afterwards have a claim to participate in the plunder. There was Parkinson, of Thavies Inn, whose door-jambs bore the inscription, "Walters and Parkinson, solicitors," but who was the only member of the firm, and whose real business was bill-discounting for clerks of good position in government offices, for men at the bar, to whom success had come late in life, and who were yet financially hampered by the indiscretions or the necessities of their youth, and for other men, who were undeniably responsible. No one ever saw Parkinson's name in a legal case, but he made believe to be an attorney very hard indeed, and denied the discountership as much as possible. The desk, in the drawers and pigeon-holes of which were locked away the acceptances and promissory notes, had a few dummy rolls of paper, duly docketed and red-taped, scattered over its top, and when an intending borrower called on Mr. Parkinson, he would find that worthy inspecting one of his dummies through his double eye-glass, and apparently quite astonished at the proposition made to him. "He had thought," he would remark in all simplicity, "that his visitor had looked in to consult him on some point of law, was about to intrust him with some little conveyancing matter, such as that," lightly touching the dummy with his glasses, "which he just had in hand. Money? he was not a money-lender. That must be clearly understood." And when the visitor, frightened at his virtuous aspect, was about to withdraw, Mr. Parkinson had to soften a little, and admit that he had been occasionally in the habit of obliging his friends—his friends only, mind—and that he had a few hundreds lying at his bank, and that, in point of fact, his friend could be obliged at the rate of about forty per cent. A tall, thin, fair-haired man Parkinson, with blonde whiskers and light blue eyes, of a benevolent expression, like a weak-minded fox; held in thralldom by a stout, over-dressed wife; churchwarden of his parish, and firmly believed by his vicar to be one of the most conscientious and kindest-hearted of men.

Of this clique, too, was Mr. Naseby, a dried-up, withered old gentleman, always wearing a tall hat, a tall, cross-barred, clear-

starched muslin cravat, with sharp-pointed collars emerging therefrom, a tightly-buttoned frock-coat, shepherd's plaid trousers, and patent boots; a little man, with a worn-out air, who looked like an old peer of the realm, but was a tradesman in Bond-street. There was nothing of the comic author's or artist's notion of the tradesman about Mr. Naseby; his conversation never showed the slightest solecism, his manner never betrayed the faintest trace of bad breeding; he lived in charming chambers, and had a perfect country house, belonged to a tradesmen's club, where the cooking was better and the play higher, than at any other similar establishment in London, and was a softer Sybarite and a keener man of business than any of the customers whose aristocratic names were entered on his ledger. Mr. Bolckoff, a Polish Jew, and an old companion of Mr. Delabole's, who had been bankrupt twice and transported once, and had subsequently made an enormous fortune as a contractor during the American war, Mr. Poss, a tobacco manufacturer in Whitechapel, and little Mr. van Moysey, the diamond merchant of Amsterdam, assisted in forming the set.

Moneyed men these, ready with their thousands when necessary, with implicit confidence in Delabole's generalship, and begetting a vast amount of confidence in any scheme with which their names were associated, amongst a certain class of wealthy speculative people. For the general public, however, a certain aristocratic flavouring was necessary, and Mr. Delabole took care that it should be forthcoming.

So at his beck and call, to be used as chairman or vice-chairman, or to take up humbler positions among the directors, according to the amount of strength and apparent stability with which it was necessary to endow the scheme about to be launched, were members of both Houses of the legislature, baronets and brothers of peers with handles to their names, retired generals and admirals who had seen service, and made money in every quarter of the globe, and a host of minor dignitaries, each one of whom had some speciality rendering him worthy of his hire. For hire they all received, whether it were in the shape of salaries and emoluments, of gratuitous shares allotted early, and readily converted into gold, of attendance fees and per diem allowances, or of hard cash unblushingly paid down, and as unblushingly received. In that year the Earl of Balla-

brophy received more from Mr. Delabole and similar agencies, for the use of his right honourable name, than had been paid to him by his long-suffering land-steward for the previous decade; Sir Cannock Chase, a Staffordshire baronet, who had mortgaged his ancestral hall to the proprietors of the collieries subsequently found on his estate, and who, as a great favour, was allowed by his creditors to have the right of shooting over his own manor, made in salaries, premiums, &c., a sufficient sum to help him to Baden, where he had a wonderful run of luck; while the Honourable Pounce Dossetor, for whom Lord Glenthresher had obtained a clerkship in the Audit Office during the short spurt while his party were in power, invested the funds which he obtained for the loan of his "honourableship" in a cab and tiger, smart clothes and an opera-stall, and by these means won the hand and fortune of Miss Swank, the West India heiress.

By the aid of this mélange of Jews and Gentiles, patricians and proletarians, plutocrats and penniless peers, with always the clear intellect of Mr. Delabole as its guide, and the shrewdness and tact and worldly knowledge of Philip Vane, acting as the clamping iron which held it together, some of the most extraordinary, even of the schemes which at that time were submitted to the public, made their successful appearance. City men will remember the Trust and Loan Company of Puttyghur, empowered to act under a special concession from the Nawab Nizam of the district; the Hammersmith Havannah and Turnham Green Trabucos Association, for the cultivation of the choicest growths of tobacco in the immediate vicinity of London; the Primrose Hill People's Palace and Park, or Miniature Mont Blanc Company, which proposed to cover the Camden Town mountain with perpetual snow by aid of a freezing apparatus, to fit it up with miniature chalets, Grands Mulets, rifts and crevasses, and for the payment of a shilling to give a visitor an opportunity of going through the whole of the Swiss excitement within the space of half an hour, with the option of being killed at the end.

These were some of the lighter achievements of the Delabole set, but there were others of far greater weight and importance; banking companies and insurance offices, projects in which philanthropy and the realisation of large percentages were to run hand in hand by the formation of docks and harbours of refuge in outlying

portions of the coast; propositions for the development of new mines, or for the working of others, which, while still undeniably fertile, had been abandoned for the want of the necessary capital; a service of submarine tramways, and of mid-air balloons; improvements in gas, and the substitution of a new illuminating power. All these were taken in hand and bore fruit in their season. At the time, however, that we again take up our acquaintance with Mr. Philip Vane, though several of these schemes were on hand, there was one which engrossed the greater part of his attention, and to which all others were subordinate, the Terra del Fuegos Silver Mining Company.

To the Terra del Fuegos undertaking Mr. Delabole had brought his best names, and his most wealthy colleagues. It was not a new affair just "prospected," and thrust upon the market, with the view of getting rid of the shares; some years previously it had been an undertaking in high repute amongst the mining brokers and such of their clients as did not mind a somewhat hazardous speculation, provided they obtained a high premium. The opinion of the mining engineers was that, as a speculation, the Terra del Fuegos were decidedly hazardous; the soil in which they were situated being, on the whole, of a loose and shifty nature, bad to work, and liable to fall in, and there being undoubted evidence of the presence of water springs in the immediate neighbourhood. What had been prophesied at last occurred; there was a sad accident, the earth fell in upon the men, the works were suspended, and finally stopped. An attempt was made to re-open them, but the experimentalists were people without either knowledge or capital, and it failed. Since then, and until within the previous twelve months, the mines had been closed. Then the scheme was submitted to Mr. Delabole, who went through it cautiously, and finally gave his opinion as to its practicability. One of the cleverest mining engineers in England was sent out, reported favourably, and superintended the sinking of another shaft, where two or three very productive lodes were discovered. The success thus begun continued; lodes after lodes running parallel, and easily to be got at, were discovered, and the shares were at a high premium. When appealed to about them, Mr. Delabole always recommended them as the best and safest of all the investments with which he had to do; but the mining engineer, after his return from his second visit, twelve

months after the re-opening of the mine, quietly went into the market and sold his shares.

To the offices of the Terra del Fuegos, situate in the City, Philip Vane is now hastening, after his elaborate little breakfast in his West End home. He has gotten over the annoyance caused by the row with the itinerant fruiterer, and is leaning back in his brougham, placidly smoking his cigar. The chiming of the quarter past ten by Big Ben suggests to Philip Vane the consultation of his watch; finding it correct, he is sliding it back into his pocket, when, conspicuous by its new gold amongst the many dainty trifles pendent from his chain, he notices a locket which has been attached there recently. Philip Vane smiles in a pleasantly conscious manner as this trophy meets his eye, and shakes his head, and would blush if he had recollected how. Finally he opens the locket, which has two crossed horse-shoes, one in diamonds the other in turquoise, on one side of it, and an illegible monogram on the other, and smiles again as he looks at its contents. It is the portrait of a woman past the first bloom of her youth, but eminently handsome, with large black eyes and aquiline profile, full sensuous lips, and masses of black hair, heaped up into an eccentric coil on her head.

Philip Vane contemplated this portrait for some little time, and when he snapped the locket to, he took from his breast-pocket a Russia leather note-case, containing a few letters, and selecting one from amongst them, replaced the others, and opened this carefully. It had been opened before, apparently with a certain amount of care; the paper round the seal had been cut away, and the seal itself was intact. It bore a crest on a widow's lozenge, with the motto, *Quo Fata ducunt*. Philip Vane looked at this seal before he took out the contents of the envelope, held it up, so that the light might fall upon it, and examined it critically. "I never noticed her seal before," he said to himself. "*Quo Fata ducunt*—whither the Fates lead. I suppose that's her motto; at all events, it's by no means a bad one, and quite suitable to me. I may as well adopt it with the rest of her belongings."

Then he took out the letter, and read it carefully through. It was a long letter, covering several sheets of thick paper, and written in a woman's hand.

Its perusal seemed quite satisfactory to Philip Vane.

"I don't think I could do better," he muttered to himself; "I have been tempted often before, but have deferred and deferred, waiting for the ten-stroke to come off, the one big thing to turn up! I don't think I need wait any longer! I may go on dipping and dipping, and never have the chance of finding such another prize in the lucky-bag. Sixty thousand pounds, and a very handsome woman, who adores me! I don't think I could improve upon that—*Quo Fata ducunt*, eh? and they have led me into rather a neat thing just now, I fancy."

He was roused from his train of thought by his brougham stopping in front of the Terra del Fuegos offices. The porter bustled out to open the carriage door, and said to Philip Vane, in a tone which a combination of asthma and respect rendered eminently husky:

"Mr. Delabole, sir, has been asking for the general manager."

### CHRONICLES OF LONDON STREETS.

#### THE SIX HEADS ON TEMPLE BAR.

THE gateway now black in the face with age, and as sooty as a venerable chimney-sweep, was built by Wren in 1672, after the Great Fire, to replace a humble toll-gate of ruder times.

Temple Bar soon became a Golgotha, for justice in those troubled times was stern, prompt, and red-handed against traitors, and fresh crops of rebels were always sprouting up ready for the sweeping sword. Many a head that had been proudly tossed in defiance of Stuarts or Guelphs, has found itself one dismal day spiked high upon that Bar, a horrible warning to plotting citizens and Jacobite Templars.

The first cruel trophy placed on the new gateway was not a head at all, but a quarter of the body of a restless old Cavalier officer, Sir Thomas Armstrong, who had been a lieutenant in the Guards, and gentleman of the horse to Charles the Second, who hated him bitterly as an evil adviser of his (Charles's) illegitimate son, the Duke of Monmouth. The plot consisted in a plan for killing the king as he was on his way from Newmarket to London. The place chosen was the Rye-House Farm, occupied by Rumbold, one of the conspirators. The royal coach was to be stopped in a narrow lane that passed the high garden-wall of the Hertfordshire farm, and a hay-cart was to be upset in the very nick of time for this purpose. The plot was planned by old

soldiers. About forty men were to be concealed behind the garden-wall, or in a courtyard near the stables. One party of these desperadoes was to fire from loops in the wall on the postilions, others were to kill the horses; a third gang was to attack the coach, and a fourth the Guards.

One of the conspirators, a barrister of the Middle Temple, had ordered for this scheme, of a gunsmith in Shire-lane, close to Temple Bar, thirty cases of pistols, thirty carbines, and ten blunderbusses, with suitable bullets and flints. The Tower was to be taken by bombardment from the river. There were to be simultaneous risings at Bristol and Taunton, and also in Scotland. These sanguine men had also discussed various plans for killing the king, either between Windsor and Hampton Court, from a mound in the Earl of Bedford's (Covent) garden, or at a bull-bait in Lyon Fields; the Duke of Argyll was to receive eight thousand pounds from Lord Shaftesbury to purchase arms in Holland for the Scotch rising. Colonel Romsey, one witness, afterwards swore that he had met Lord William Russell and the Duke of Monmouth, by Lord Shaftesbury's wish, to discuss this affair at the house of Mr. Shephard, a merchant near Lombard-street.

Unfortunate Sir Thomas, seized at Leyden by a scout who had been offered a reward of five thousand gilders, was delivered over to Chudleigh, the English envoy, by virtue of a warrant obtained from the States for apprehending any of the Rye House conspirators who had sought refuge in Holland. In his confusion, Armstrong forgot to plead Dutch protection, though he had been born at Leyden, and was, therefore, a natural born Dutch subject. The king pressed the law against him with relentless hate. Charles, indeed, openly accused him of having been a spy of Cromwell's, sent over to Belgium during the troubles to assassinate him. This charge Sir Thomas strongly resented. He had, he said, been really sent by the Earl of Oxford, and other Cavaliers, with bills of exchange and important despatches to Charles at Brussels, and had brought back letters of thanks from the king. Before this he had laid a prisoner half starved in Lambeth House and the Tower; and for that very journey to Brussels he was sent to the Gatehouse, and lay there in extreme danger of his life until the Protector died.

Armstrong was brought to the bar of the King's Bench (by *habeas corpus*),

June the 14th, 1684. Sir Robert Sawyer, the Attorney-General, moved for the outlaw's instant execution. Sir Thomas pleaded the statute (sixth Edward the Sixth) which provides that any outlaw surrendering himself within one year from the pronouncing of the outlawry, can claim trial by jury. The Attorney-General sternly refused to admit this plea, as Armstrong had not surrendered, but had been seized by force. To this Sir Thomas responded that several months of the year were still remaining, and he could at any time have surrendered himself. But when Lord Jeffreys (the Lord Chief Justice) summed up (refusing a trial), he held against the prisoner.

"Then followed," says Macanlay, in his vigorous, impassioned way, "one of many terrible scenes which in those times disgraced our courts." Mrs. Matthews, the daughter of the unhappy man, stood by her father's side.

"My lord!" she cried, "I hope you will not murder my father: this is murdering a man."

"Who is this woman?" bellowed Jeffreys, in one of his drunken outbursts. "Marshal, take her into custody. Why, how now? Because your relation is attainted for high treason, must you take upon you to tax the court of justice for murder, when we grant the execution according to law? Take her away!"

Mrs. Matthews.—"God Almighty's judgment light upon you!"

Jeffreys.—"God Almighty's judgment will light upon those that are guilty of high treason."

Mrs. Matthews.—"Amen, I pray God."

Jeffreys.—"So say I. But clamours never prevail upon me at all. I thank God I am clamour proof, and will never fear to do my duty."

So the poor lady was carried away.

Sir Thomas then asked for the money taken from him when he was arrested, and which he needed to fee his lawyers, but Jeffreys refused this request also.

"You may be as angry as you like, Sir Thomas," he said, "we are not concerned at your anger; we will undoubtedly do our duty."

Sir Thomas.—"I ought to have the benefit of the law. I demand no more."

Jeffreys.—"That you shall have, by the grace of God. See that execution be done on Friday next according to law. Yes, you shall have the full benefit of the law."

Within six days Sir Thomas was hung. Bishop Burnet, writing years after about

these strainings of the prerogative, complains that Sir Thomas was loaded with irons when in Newgate, "though that was not ordinary for a man who had served in such posts to the king." But Armstrong had led a vicious life; and the court thought that the suddenness of death would drive him to wholesale confessions. He, however, denied his guilt, died serene and penitent, and confessed nothing. He was drawn to Tyburn on a sledge, attended by a numerous guard. All up Holborn and Oxford-road he read the *Whole Duty of Man*. At the gallows Doctor Tennison knelt and prayed with him. He then took off his periwig, and put on the ghastly white cap, praying with uplifted hands till the cart drew away. "Soon after this trial," says Narcissus Luttrell, "when Jeffreys went down to Windsor to see the king, Charles took a diamond ring off his finger, and presented it to the worthy judge as a reward for his loyal services." The Whigs always called this ring "the blood-stone." The king also gave Jeffreys this remarkable advice—extraordinary, but "not the less necessary to him," says Burnet—"that as it was a hot summer, and he was going the circuit, not to drink too much."

Sir John Friend, an Aldgate brewer, and Sir William Parkyns, a Warwickshire baronet, were the first traitors whose heads frowned grimly from the Bar.

The absence, in 1695, of King William in that campaign in the Netherlands during which he took Namur, gave great opportunities to the Jacobite plotters, who, at meetings at the Old King's Head in Leadenhall-street, resolved on an immediate insurrection, if they could only get a promise of ten thousand men from France. A party of these rash men, on the 10th of June—the birthday of the exiled Prince of Wales—were insane enough, when heated with wine, to sally forth from a Drury-lane tavern, and, beating kettle-drums and waving flags, to light defiant bonfires. But the watch and mob sacked the tavern, trod out the bonfires, and apprehended Coke and Goodman, the ringleaders, who were fined and imprisoned. William returned to England in October, crowned with laurels. In January, 1696, James sent over two secret emissaries—the Duke of Berwick, to encourage the rising, and Sir George Barclay, a Scotch officer, who had served under Dundee, to help in an insane plot which involved the assassination of William. Forty or fifty mounted men required for his purpose, and about

twenty troopers of James's guard, had followed Barclay to England. One of these troopers was Brigadier Rookwood; another Major Bernardi, a Genoese, who for this crime afterwards lingered in prison more than thirty years. Barclay always called these men boastfully his "Janizaries," and swore they would one day win him the George and Garter. A servant named Keyes, who had been trumpeter in the Blues, tried to win over the Roman Catholics of that regiment. Sir John Friend opposed the rash design, but kept the secret; Parkyns, an old gouty country gentleman, approved of an attempt in which his infirmities, however, rendered him unable to share; a gambler and bully named De la Rue, Porter, Charnock, and other Catholic gentlemen of sanguine temperament, also joined in the scheme, which was thus finally planned:

Every Saturday William drove from Kensington to hunt in Richmond Park. At Turnham Green he always took boat to cross the river, and on the Surrey side was met by a second coach and a fresh body of Guards. The Jacobites decided to attack him on his return in a narrow, winding lane leading from the river to Turnham Green. The forty men were to assemble, in small parties, at various public-houses near the Green, and were to meet when the signal was given that the royal coach was approaching. As the royal retinue struggled on with the lumbering vehicle, Charnock was to attack the guard in the rear, Rookwood on one flank, and Porter on the other. Meanwhile Barclay, with eight trusty men, would take care of the king in the coach. In the interval two orderlies, one a Fleming and the other an Irishman, were appointed to watch the palace at Kensington, and report progress to Charnock and Barclay. At Calais James was to wait for a bonfire on the Kentish cliffs, that was to announce the violent death of his detested nephew. King William was saved by the remorse of Prendergrast, a friend of Porter's, and two other conspirators. The day fixed for the hunting proved cold and stormy. The king postponed his ride. The conspirators arranged for the next Saturday, and suspected nothing. On the night before the appointed day, they met and drank together at a Jacobite tavern in Maiden-lane. "Tomorrow or never!" cried one. "Tomorrow, boys," swore another, "we shall have the plunder of the field!" The next day—pistols loaded and swords sharpened—the chief men met at Porter's lodgings.

"Prendergrast," said Porter, "you are one of the eight named to do this business. I have a musketoon for you that will carry eight balls." "Don't be afraid of smashing the glass windows, Mr. Prendergrast," cried another. From Porter's lodgings the party adjourned for refreshment, before starting, to the Blue Posts in Spring Gardens. Suddenly a conspirator arrived with ominous news. The king would not hunt that day. The Guards had returned from Richmond at full gallop—the horses all in a lather. Some then proposed falling on the king on the morrow, on his way to chapel. Porter crushed an orange, and they all drank the gross Jacobite toast—"To the squeezing of the rotten orange." That same night, however, files of musketeers with torches arrested twenty-one of the gang.

Rookwood and Bernard were seized in bed in a Jacobite alehouse on Tower-hill. In a few days Parkyns was tracked to a garret in the Temple. Porter and Keyes were hunted down by the hue and cry near Leatherhead. Friend was found hidden in a Quaker's house. Another of them was caught painted and patched in the dress of a fine lady. Ferguson, a Scotchman, was drawn from under a bed in Gray's-inn-lane. The trials once begun, Charnock, an expelled fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, was found guilty and hanged; and so were King, and Keyes, the ex-trumpeter of the Blues. Rookwood and two of his companions, named Lowick and Cranbourne, were the last to perish. Sir John Friend was tried for high treason at the Old Bailey Sessions House, March the 23rd, 1696 (eighth William the Third), before Lord Chief Justice Holt.

A witness deposed to a meeting at the King's Head, in Leadenhall-street, in 1695, which Lord Ailesbury, Lord Montgomery, Sir John Friend, Sir William Parkyns, and other zealous Jacobite gentlemen, attended? After dinner it was agreed to send Captain Charnock, who was present, into France to King James, to ask the French king for ten thousand men, that is, eight thousand foot, one thousand horse, and one thousand dragoons, and they promised to meet these allies on landing with two thousand horse. A Captain Blair next deposed to Friend having shown him at his lodgings in Surrey-street, Strand, a colonel's commission from King James. Friend did not make much head against these witnesses, though he denied all knowledge of any attempt to kill the king. He was found guilty of high treason and sentenced to death.

The next day, in the same place, Sir William Parkyns, of St. Paul's parish, Covent Garden, was tried for the same offence. It was proved that Parkyns had attended various Jacobite meetings at a tavern in St. James's-street; at his own lodgings, in Norfolk-street, Strand; at the Globe Tavern, in Hatton Garden; at the Nag's Head, in Covent Garden; and at the Sun, in the Strand. At these meetings the king's assassination in a lane between Brentford and Turnham Green had been discussed with Sir George Barclay, the agent of King James, who had brought over eight hundred pounds to supply horses and men for the intended rising. Parkyns provided four horses, three to be mounted with his own men. The prisoner's servant deposed to bringing up three horses from the country to the George-Inn, Holborn. It was also shown that chests containing four dozen swords with loose hilts, thirty-two carbines, and thirty-five cases of pistols, were sent for by Parkyns from a servant's house, and buried in the prisoner's garden in Warwickshire, when the plot exploded and the hue and cry came.

Parkyns and Friend were executed at Tyburn, on Friday, April the 3rd, 1696. They both died like gallant and fearless Jacobite gentlemen, true to the last to the underserving Stuart. In the farewell paper he wrote, Friend said:

"God comfort our distressed king; restore him to his right, and his misled subjects to their allegiance. Bless also his royal consort, our gracious Queen Mary (of Modena); his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales—that he may grow in stature, and in favour with God and man. Support and strengthen all those that suffer in any kind for a good cause; give them patience under all their afflictions, and a happy deliverance out of them. Forgive all mine enemies."

Parkyns was even bolder. He said:

"It is true I was privy to the design upon the prince, but I was not to act in it; and I freely acknowledge, and think it for my honour to say, that I was acting in the interests of the king (James), being always firmly persuaded of the justice of his cause, and I looked upon it as my duty, both as a subject and an Englishman, to assist him in the recovery of his throne, which I believe him to be deprived of contrary to all right and justice."

At Tyburn, three non-juring clergymen, the celebrated Jeremy Collier (who escaped), Mr. Cook, and Mr. Smart (who

were afterwards taken up for it, and censured in the King's Bench), were bold enough to go up into the cart that stood ready under the gallows, and there to lay their hands on the two prisoners' heads and fully absolve them. Sir John Friend then said to the sheriff:

"Mr. Sheriff, I desire the cart may not be too fast to go away till we give the sign."

When the white cap was put on, but not yet drawn over his eyes, Friend said:

"My Saviour wore a crown of thorns for me. The Lord receive my soul! The Lord have mercy on me!"

When the cap was drawn down, Parkyns said:

"Executioner, had I best hold up my legs, or stand in the cart when it goes away?"

Executioner.—"It is best to stand, sir, I think."

Parkyns.—"But then my feet will hang in the cart."

Executioner.—"If you please give me notice when you will have the cart go away."

Friend.—"Stretch forth thy arms, O Lord, and receive my soul, and carry it to heaven, I beseech thee. Executioner, when we knock, go away."

After a few ejaculations, they gave the signal. They had both of them given money to the executioner.

How can we help admiring men so brave and so true, had though their cause was?

In 1716, Colonel John Oxburgh's head mounted to the same bad eminence. This Oxburgh was a Lancashire gentleman, who had served in the French army. A rebel general (who escaped from Newgate just in time to miss the gallows, April the 10th, 1716), had made him colonel directly on joining the chevalier's army. To Oxburgh had been intrusted the painful duty of surrendering the Jacobite forces, when the king's dragoons had surrounded the northern revolters at Preston. It was with difficulty the wild Highlanders, frenzied with despair, could be prevented sallying out and cutting their way through the enemy's dragoons. Oxburgh met death with a serene courage. A fellow-prisoner described his words as coming like as "a gleam from God." Those who came to see him said they received comfort from the man they came to comfort. Oxburgh was executed at Tyburn, May the 14th, 1716; his body was buried at St. Giles's, and his head placed, two days after, upon Temple Bar.

In 1722, the head of Layer, the Jacobite

plotter of Southampton-buildings, whose career we have sketched in a previous number,\* was added to the ghastly series. The fifth and sixth were added in 1746, after the Scotch rebellion. On July the 15th, 1746 (twentieth George the Second), Colonel Francis Townley was tried for high treason, in the court-house of St. Margaret's-hill, Southwark. Among the judges and justices present on this occasion were Lord Chief Justice Willes and Sir Thomas de Veale, whom Hogarth has celebrated. Townley, of an old Lancashire family, had fought for the French king, and had been the first to join the Pretender. It was proved only too clearly that he had been seen, on the retreat from Derby, riding at the head of the Manchester regiment, brave and gallant, in plaid sash and white cockade. The companion head was that of George Fletcher, a rash young Salford shopkeeper. He had been seen mounting guard at Carlisle, and beating up for volunteers on the Manchester Exchange. Both men died bravely on Kennington Common, first throwing their prayer-books and gold-laced hats to the crowd. Their hearts were cast into a fire, and a fighting man of the day eat a piece of Townley's flesh to show his zeal for the House of Hanover and the winning side. Horace Walpole tells us that men made a trade of letting out telescopes to see these heads on the Bar more clearly.

The last head blew down in 1771, and the hateful spikes were removed early in the present century.

#### CHANTREY'S WOODCOCKS.

THIS name suggests a subject in which sporting, sculpture, and poetry were combined in a more than usually pleasant way, each giving a zest to the other two, and the whole forming a halo around a genial and distinguished man.

Somewhat more than forty years ago, Sir Francis Chantrey, the eminent sculptor, formed one among a number of guests at Holkham Hall, Norfolk, the seat of Mr. Coke, afterwards Earl of Leicester, the most celebrated commoner in his day for all that befits the life of an English country gentleman. It was in the shooting season, towards the close of November; and the sculptor was glad enough to join in a sport of which he was a keen admirer. The party

were ranged by the host, according to the rules which sportsmen approve; and at the very beginning of the day's proceedings Sir Francis Chantrey had a bit of luck which made him quite the hero. One of the guests present, Mr. Spencer Stanhope, in a letter written soon afterwards to a Norfolk clergyman, told simply what the achievement was, although he did not know all the attendant circumstances. "Chantrey was placed in the gravel-pit that, you will remember, is just under the Hall. I was standing next to him, but hidden from him by the bank formed by the pit. Knowing how keen a sportsman he was, I was amazed at seeing him running up to me, without his gun, just at the moment when the hares were passing us in all directions; but when I saw him waving his Peruvian hat" (Chantrey loved to "get himself up" in a picturesque way when with a shooting party) "over his head, and distinguished his joyous countenance, I knew that all was right. 'Two woodcocks at one shot!' burst from him, and announced to me the feat that he had performed."

How far such a double shot is a rarity, we shall see presently; but the company present resolved to make much of the incident. Mr. Coke marshalled all—sportsmen, keepers, and beaters—in a line, made Chantrey pass along the rank, and every one doffed his hat and made a bow to him. On that same evening a resolution, a kind of pleasant manifesto, was drawn up at Holkham Hall, to the effect that, "Amidst the events of this day, it is especially worthy of being recorded that Mr. Chantrey" (he had not been knighted at that time) "killed at one shot two woodcocks. Considering this exploit as among the many illustrious achievements, if not the most extraordinary, of that great and extraordinary man, it was unanimously proposed to Mr. Coke that the spot should thenceforth be handed down to posterity, and the honour of the individual perpetuated, by the name of Chantrey's Hill being given to it—assured that no sculptor in Europe had ever done before so much in the art of shooting: Mr. Chantrey having but the day before killed at one shot a hare and a rabbit." This document was witnessed by Mr. Coke, Archdeacon Glover, and Mr. Spencer Stanhope; a copy of it was presented to the sculptor, and is preserved among the Chantrey manuscripts.

Chantrey had the use of only one eye. This fact was not much known except to his personal friends, for the blind eye pre-

\* See ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, vol. iv, p. 402.

sented nearly the same outward appearance as the other. It might have affected his shooting with an ordinary gun, but he had one adapted and sighted to suit his own special need. Many years afterwards, when the sculptor was no more, the author of *Memorials of Chantrey* said that Sir Francis's proficiency with rod and gun had been overrated. This was denied by the Holkham friends, who ranked Chantrey high among their number as a marksman. It seems pretty clear, however, that the double shot was the result of accident; for he stated that he saw, and aimed at, only one woodcock; the other rose from the ground, came into the line of sight just at the critical moment, and shared the fate of its feathered companion.

Mr. Muirhead, whose volume we shall notice presently, quotes from a private letter a somewhat similar instance of a sportsman bringing down more than he had aimed at. "As you are fond of a sporting anecdote, I may tell you what occurred to me yesterday, in making my first beat of the season after woodcocks at Haywood. I was walking towards a large clump of hollies, with the keeper about thirty yards on my right, when two woodcocks got up together, one flying to the left of the clump, and the other to the right. I fired at the left bird, and brought him down, calling out to the keeper to mark the other; when he replied, 'I saw only one bird, which you killed.' This surprised me, as I had picked up my bird considerably to the left of the clump, and quite out of sight of the keeper. But whilst we were discussing the matter, and trying to account for the extraordinary disappearance of the second bird, my old Belle was observed at a dead point, about forty yards beyond the clump of hollies; and there we found the missing bird under her nose. The only way in which I can account for the circumstance is, that the right-hand bird must have crossed the line of sight just as I fired at the bird on the left—which, by the way, fell within twenty yards of the gun."

In after years, this achievement of the sculptor-sportsman gave rise to a considerable rummaging of sporting records for instances of double, triple, or multiple success with one shot. It soon became evident that Chantrey's shot was far from being the most remarkable known; it was remembered rather for the celebrity of the man than for the marvel of the aim. Colonel Hawker, in his *Book of Instructions to Young Sportsmen*, gives many instances

of wonderful "bags;" and a multitude of instances have presented themselves since his book was written. On one occasion eight hooper swans, averaging nineteen pounds each, were knocked down at one shot. On another, thirty-five wild geese were killed by one discharge of a single-barrelled punt gun. But instances in point are more fairly those connected with shooting game than shooting wild-fowl. Lieutenant Kirkes once brought down six snipes with one shot out of a wisp of seven; and his son, Captain Kirkes, killed a grouse and two hares at once, the hares sitting on a rising ground, and the grouse flying towards it. A gamekeeper named Alexander Strachan, in the service of the Earl of Kintore, on one occasion shot six snipes on the wing at one time. In 1856, on the Scottish moors, a sportsman stalked up to four black-cocks, caught them in a line as they rose, and killed them all; three fell at once, and the fourth a hundred yards distant from them. Mr. Muirhead once fired at two partridges as they rose together from some long wheat stubble, brought them down at one shot just as they got on the wing, and mortally wounded three others which had not risen. A wild shot at a covey, as they turned over a low part of a hedge, was rewarded by bringing down nine birds at once. Doctor Sandwith, who bore so honourable a part in the defence of Kars by Colonel Sir Fenwick Williams, during the Crimean war, was shooting on a branch of the Euphrates near Erzeroum, and bagged four spoonbills at one shot. A man named Croft, in the year 1856, while shooting on the river Wye, killed eighteen grey plovers at one shot, and on another occasion sixteen ducks; but this was achieved by means of a large swivel gun, fixed in a boat, and loaded with a quarter of a pound of powder and a pound of shot—rather hard lines for the birds. This of course belonged to the wild-fowl series. And so did one recorded by Colonel Hawker, in which twenty widgeons, ducks, pintails, and plovers were brought down at once with a common shoulder gun that carried only five ounces of shot. He speaks also of forty-three knots and godwits being killed at one discharge by three ounces of number four shot. A keeper on a Norfolk estate, early in the century, killed seven bustards at one shot; but his manner of doing it would hardly have been regarded by the bustards as fair play. He looked out for their tracks on the snow, and put cabbages there to attract them; he planted

a battery of three large duck guns at a distance of a hundred and fifty yards, all pointing to that spot; and he arranged three strings from the three triggers to a pit or hole a short distance behind. Taking his seat in the hiding-place at daybreak, he watched his opportunity, and brought down seven bustards with a simultaneous discharge of the three guns. Lest there should be some numerical mistake in the statement that five hundred starlings were once brought down with one discharge of a single-barrelled punt gun, we will pass it by.

But to return to our Chantrey. The day was so pleasant to him, the compliments so merry, that he resolved to perpetuate the memory of the event in his own way. He sculptured the two woodcocks, as a monument to their memory. Arranging them as dead game, in such a way as best to show the markings of the plumage, he modelled them in clay, and chiselled them in white marble. They formed a kind of alto-relievo in front of a vertical slab, and have ever since been admired for their delicate and graceful execution. Over the alto-relievo is the inscription:

TWO WOODCOCKS  
KILLED AT HOLKHAM,  
Nov., 1830,  
By FRANCIS CHANTREY, SCULPTOR,  
AT ONE SHOT.  
PRESENTED TO  
THOS. WM. COKE, ESQ., 1834.

This 1830 is said to be a mistake; the year was 1829. The sculpture is at Holkham Hall; the model, or a plaster cast of it, is in the Chantrey Gallery at Oxford; while Sir Edwin Landseer introduced the two woodcocks in a picture which afterwards became the property of Lady Chantrey.

The titled, the learned, the artistic, the poetic, all who partook of the hospitality of Holkham, admired this beautiful handiwork of Chantrey; and as all of them had heard of the celebrated shooting, they began to associate the two events as cause and effect—the achievement of the gun and the achievement of the chisel. It was very tempting to men who could write elegant epigrams. Chantrey killed two birds, and then made them almost live again in marble: here was a subject ready at once; and divines, statesmen, judges, poets, artists, wrote their pleasant bits of versification. More than a quarter of a century later, Mr. Muirhead, one of the Holkham circle, resolved to collect all these epigrams, so far as he could, and to print them so far as he was permitted. Lady Chantrey

placed at his disposal all the manuscript material in her possession. Holkham library brought forth twenty-seven of the *jeux d'esprit*; Lord Brougham procured some that had been written by Bishop Maltby, Lord Tenterden, and Sir John Williams; and other friends brought treasures to the storehouse from other quarters. The result was the publication of an elegant volume, called *Winged Words on Chantrey's Woodcocks*: edited by James Patrick Muirhead. The poets were forty-two in number; but the separate epigrams themselves, including translations of those in Greek and Latin, rose to a hundred and seventy-nine. Of course those in Greek can only be understood by learned folk. One by Archdeacon Glover was translated by the archdeacon himself, thus:

Tho' fall'n by Chantrey's hand, we yet survive;  
His gun may kill, his chisel makes alive.

Another, in four lines, by Bishop Selwyn, was given by him in Greek and in Latin; but we will merely present Canon Bowles's English translation:

Both had one fate; their lives together end;  
And both to gloomy Acheron descend.  
Mourn not their end, nor deem their fate severe,  
Fix'd by transcendent art immortal here.

Bishop Maltby, Sir John Williams, Doctor Jelf, the Master of Balliol, and other classical scholars, in like manner brought their knowledge of Greek to bear on the subject; while the Marquis Wellesley, Archdeacon Wrangham, the Reverend W. G. Cookesley, Lord Tenterden, the Head Master of Winchester, and others, chose rather to put their Latin to the test.

One lady, the Honourable Frederica Anson, appears among the bards:

Long may this spotless marble tell,  
When Chantrey fired two woodcocks fell:  
They met their doom together.  
But now, by his transcendent art,  
Into new life he bids them start,  
And makes them live for ever.

Bishop Wilberforce contributed this:

Life in death, a mystic lot,  
Dealt thou to the winged band.  
Death, from thine unerring shot;  
Life, from thine undying hand!

Lord Jeffrey, the celebrated editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, wrote:

The life the sportsman-artist took,  
The artist-sportsman could restore;  
As true and warm in ev'ry look,  
And far more lasting than before.

Mr. Jekyll found two lines sufficient for the following:

"Two birds with one stone;" but the point has wit,  
If one stone revives both the birds it has hit.

Three couplets of Lord Jeffrey, each complete in itself, are similar examples of a kind of epigram by no means easy to produce :

Their good and ill from the same source they drew,  
Here shrin'd in marble by the hand that slew.

For their reft lives the slaughter to atone,  
Here gives an immortality in stone.

The same skill'd hand that took their lives on high,  
Here, on this marble, bids them never die.

The late Allan Cunningham gave a dozen lines to the subject :

The snowy hills of Norway bred us,  
The silver springs of Holkham fed us;  
A sculptor, as we wing'd our way,  
Held out his gun and made us clay;  
But, sorrowing for us as we fell,  
To marble turn'd us by a spell.  
Princes and peers flock'd in a bevy,  
And said, "How glorious! done in gravity!"  
Geologists look'd marvelling on,  
But feeling, cried, "By Heav'n, a stone!"  
While Buckland, that superb dissector  
Of things in flint, said, "Lads, a lecture!"

The opportunity tempted many others to throw bits of humour into the matter. In those days, between the period of the shooting of the birds and that of the sculpturing of the marble, the Reform Bill was a specially exciting topic; and Baron Alderson brought it into requisition in the following way :

Here lie the fruits of Chantrey's gun :  
Two woodcocks, yet the shot but one!  
Oh had he been content to kill  
"The Bill and nothing but the Bill!"

And Mr. Muirhead :

A rare success was Chantrey's lot,  
He bagg'd us at a single shot;  
And to commemorate his skill,  
In marble made the Re-form'd Bill!

The same epigrammatist gave a sly poke at Chantrey in the following; but the sculptor would have accepted it as being quite fair, seeing that, although he certainly did hit two birds with one shot, he, as certainly (to use a homely phrase) "didn't go to do it."

Sir Francis must sure have been much in the habit  
Of missing each partridge, hare, pheasant, and rabbit;  
For once when he kill'd, by a shot transcendental,  
Two woodcocks, the verdict was "Death accidental."

Here is another, from the same pen :

Chantrey invented the best of gun-locks,  
Which cocks one hammer, and hammers two cocks!

Mr. Hudson Gurney's muse produced the following triplet :

Down from the north that would have starv'd them,  
This was the way that Chantrey sarv'd them,  
He shot them first, and then he carv'd them!

One more, by Lord Jeffrey :

The sculptor killed them at a shot,  
And when the deed was done,  
He carv'd them—first, upon one toast,  
And then, upon one stone!

These are only a sample of the gems in Mr. Muirhead's elegant volume, which, although it has been published many years, is known only within a limited circle.

#### A SKETCH.

OUR cottage crests the summit of a hill,  
That rises o'er an old cathedral town.  
There float through summer noontides, warm and still,  
Rare scents of heather from the purple down;  
There the sweet April shadows glance and play,  
There autumn's glory glows from golden leas,  
And the wild north winds of the winter's day,  
Bring keen fresh waftings from the far-off seas.

Through the calm July evenings' sunset blush,  
Where the dark woods sweep round the glittering river,

Through the rich silence of the country hush,  
We hear the soft rain mid the grasses shiver.

Our little garden like a jewel gleams,  
Full, like a cup, of bright old homely flowers,  
And through the breath of breeze-wood roses streams  
The bells' faint clashing from the minster towers.

Lingering at nightfall by the lonely house,  
Mid jasmine stars in dark-green foliage set,  
And tall white lilies in majestic rows,  
And fragrant musk, and dewy mignonette,  
In the deep valley, one by one, we see  
The humble town put out its lingering lights,  
While the great towers that face us solemnly,  
Take up their brooding vigil with the night's.

We muse how every separate homestead bears  
Its separate crown of joy, or cross of sorrow,  
Ere taking our own weight of hopes or cares,  
To court their brief oblivion till the morrow.  
The morrow, which to cottage, grange, or hall,  
Brings twelve long hours, each fraught with weal  
or woe.

Ah! gather present peace, thank God for all :  
Most, that no future we are given to know.

#### MY FIRST MYSTERY.

I AM going to relate an occurrence which some people will think very insignificant. In the even tenour of my homely life, however, it was what is termed an "event." It turned out for the best, as many bitter things do in this life of struggle. Many, I am told, are scourged by the affliction under which I unconsciously suffered. I relate my experiences, therefore, by the earnest advice of my friend the vicar, for the benefit of all whom they may concern.

I lived on the borders of Epping Forest, in a small house, which looked like a tall square tower of brick; it was old, and covered over at one side, and part of another, with ivy. There was a pretty little flower-garden, with the finest stock-gilliflowers in that part of the world in front, and hollyhocks of various colours, and roses nodded over the wooden paling. A very good fruit garden, though the trees were a little old, containing apples and pears, together with gooseberries and raspberries, and other "small fruit," was in the rear.

I was always a staid, quiet fellow, who liked home and a punctual, comfortable life, but being a bachelor, I began, at the age of nine-and-thirty, to feel a little lonely, and my income being nearly five hundred a year, and my house and appurtenances being quite enough for a modest family, I very secretly, and with much precaution, began to look out for a wife.

I don't think any one suspected me of matrimonial tendencies, with so much circumspection did I conduct matters.

I believe people supposed me to be rather older than I actually was. My hair was a little thin at top; some people said I was bald; perhaps I was so. My face is not short and dumpy. I don't think there is anything vulgar about it. It is long and thin, not a smirking, impudent countenance, but very grave, and perhaps a little shy. I was thin, and held myself strictly upright, and never practised that loose way of throwing my limbs about that some men affect. I called young ladies "miss," and their mammas "madam," and treated both equally with the ceremonious respect that flatters their self-esteem, without for a moment violating that profound sense of decorum which is ever uppermost in the mind of a young lady of delicate feelings and refined education.

I had no doubt that I should be fortunate enough, in consequence of the marked superiority, in the points I have indicated, of my manners (and with ladies manner is everything, appearance very little) over those of the young men who were then to be met with—I say I had no doubt that I should be fortunate enough to please whatever young lady out of the eleven with whom I had the honour to be acquainted I should ultimately select for the partner of my life and the regulator of my household. I chose Miss Martha Pendles. She was tall and silent, had commanding black eyes, and was full of prudence. I knew I had only to speak. I did. She looked surprised. Her magnificent black eyes were fixed steadily upon me for nearly half a minute, while she meditated, and then she accepted me.

She was, I may say, much admired. She was majestically handsome. I felt that I was fortunate. I had secured the most devoted and economical of women.

She came home. I assured her of my undying affection, and talked of culinary and household affairs. I asked her, among other things, how much wine—it was a subject I was sensitive upon—she thought

would quite suffice her every week. She told me she never drank wine, beer, or any other exciting fluid; and at dinner, luncheon, and supper, her glass always stood empty, except when there was water in it. I loved her more and more every day.

I found her advice most valuable. She recommended me strongly, for instance, to cultivate her cousin, Captain Thunder. He was tall, loud, and had black whiskers. His name was Thomas Frisk Thunder, and his air was festive and military.

He was in delicate health, though he looked robust. He was threatened with consumption: but his colour was florid, and his appetite excellent. But consumption is a treacherous complaint, and its advances, I am told, insidious and disguised.

He had twenty thousand pounds in three per cent government stock, and had quarrelled with all his relations except ourselves.

I quite agreed with my wife. Here kindness and prudence pointed in the same direction. We were very attentive to him. He almost lived at Poplar Hollow, that was the name of our house. We bore a great deal from him. He had that loose way of flinging his limbs about, which I spoke of, and which Martha detested as much as I; and he was totally destitute of the respectful deference and reserve which are found always so winning with the fair sex. I have seen him, when he thought I was not looking, chuck Martha under the chin. And, for both our sakes, she bore it like an angel. But when I talked of it to her, she requested me to tell him how it disgusted her; which I did, and begged of him to consider a lady's feelings; which he promised me he would.

Everything was going on thus happily, and he was growing to like us more and more, when his regiment was ordered to the West Indies, and in little more than a year and a half, poor fellow, he died of yellow fever.

The consols did not turn up. I suppose he was extravagant. He must have sold his stock.

We had acted for the best, however, and did not regret it much, although he had been a very heavy item in the expenses of our little household for upwards of a year. He liked ducks and peas, and asparagus and oysters, and drank a ridiculous quantity of port. However, let us bear lightly on his weaknesses, and if he took no care of his money, let us hope that he did at least of his spiritual interests.

I expressed to dear Martha's mother, when next I saw her in town, my surprise at the total disappearance of poor Thunder's twenty thousand pounds stock; and she looked at me for some seconds, as if I had two heads, and then, being one of those fat women who see something ludicrous in everything, she shook and wheezed with laughter, until a good stiff fit of coughing pulled her up.

Then drying her eyes, she croaked with a most unfeminine grin, still panting:

"Who on earth, my dear Jerry" (I forgot to tell you that my name is Jeremiah Barnacle) "told you that poor Frisk had twenty thousand pounds? He never had twenty thousand pence! And this was the secret of your hams and oysters, and port wine, and boarding and lodging poor penniless Frisk whenever he had a month's leave," and the cynical old creature laughed again, till the chair creaked and the floor trembled. I was disgusted, and could not help saying:

"Madam, it was from your daughter, who conceals nothing from me, that I learned that fact; who she may have learned it from I neither know nor care. But she it was who advised our little hospitalities to poor Frisk. I call him Frisk, my wife never called him anything but Captain Thunder. It was her advice, and I followed it; and I mention the fact, because, however ridiculous you may be disposed to think me, you can hardly laugh at your own daughter. You may treat the disappointment, if you please, as mine only, but you must feel that the ducks, and oysters, and hams, and other things you are so good as to remember with so much particularity, though proceeding from me, in the first instance, were nevertheless some little loss also to Martha, a loss which I might not unnaturally have expected him, in some trifling way, to have made good to her."

This rebuke, which I delivered sternly, had some little effect on her for a moment, for she "hemmed," and bridled up, and looked a little queerly along the carpet; but the old wretch, I regret to have to apply such a term to my Martha's mother (but such a want of common sympathy in so near a relative is positively odious) burst out again into another peal of the same heartless and stupid laughter, though she was palpably a little ashamed of it; and in that unlady-like condition I left her.

Martha was accuracy itself, and could not have been misinformed. Still it seemed to vex her, as it certainly did me, that her

mother should think her such an egregious fool.

I must now relate a painful occurrence; a mysterious state of things; a discovery; and an affliction, which I remember still with consternation.

My wife was attacked with an extraordinary sort of fit. How long she had been suffering from that kind of seizure, I could not tell—she could not tell. I will relate how I first discovered her alarming infirmity.

Dear Martha had retired to rest, perfectly well, at ten o'clock. I had some letters to write, which detained me, for some hours later, in the drawing-room. While writing them, I had occasion twice to consult accounts, which were filed in a little press in our bedroom.

My first visit was at about a quarter to eleven. I found her in bed, but wide awake, and, apparently, perfectly well, except that her face was unusually flushed, and her eyes unnaturally brilliant. She said she felt very nervous, and complained of my stealing about the house, disturbing her.

I entreated her to compose herself to sleep. She answered that if I were good enough either to stay in the room, or to stay out of it, it would compose her more than anything she could do.

She had such a pointed way of putting things!

I was obliged to go up a second time on a similar errand, about an hour later. I put off my shoes lest I should disturb her, and I listened at the door. She was breathing stertorously; or, in less technical language, snoring.

Dear Martha never admitted that she snored. It made her very angry that I should insinuate or believe any such thing. And yet undoubtedly she did, and so loud and long, as not unfrequently to keep me awake for hours.

On this occasion the sounds were welcome to me, because I could enter the room without fear of disturbing her, and on doing so, I found her still very much flushed, but in a profound sleep.

When I finally returned she was still snoring; but, to my horror, I found her lying on the floor. My terror increased, for, on endeavouring to get her up, I could not waken her. With the assistance of the housemaid I got her into bed. But she continued insensible till five o'clock in the morning, when I found that on raising her head, by an additional pillow, she mumbled a little, and showed some signs of returning

consciousness, and shortly after, to my great relief, I did succeed in waking her. After talking for a few minutes quite like herself, she fell into a natural and healthy sleep, and next morning was just as usual.

I became, in consequence of what I had witnessed, extremely uneasy about dear Martha's state of health.

I began to watch her more closely, and I found, to my consternation, that these alarming seizures were of frequent occurrence, and always at the same time. She would go to bed perfectly well; we would both fall asleep; I would then, perhaps an hour or two later, be awakened by her persistent snoring, and find her in the state I have described.

It was horrifying; for I could not tell how it might end. I represented to dear Martha that she ought to consult a physician. She would not hear of it. I then advised her to live a little less abstemiously. I implored of her to take, if it were only a glass of sherry at dinner and luncheon. But on this point she was inexorable also; and when I pressed it she became quite impatient.

I write with my diary beside me, and in it I find the following entry: "Dear Martha makes me ashamed of myself. How Quixotically abstinent she is! While I sip my tumbler of brandy-and-water, and drink my pint of half-and-half daily. My apothecary, to whom I have described her formidable seizures, persists in his opinion that the nervous system is prostrate, and cannot recover its tone without the use of a moderate stimulant. How is it that women are so prone to enthusiasm, and so ready in a good cause to rush into a fanatical extreme? She has laid down a rule of life for herself, and the menace of death itself is powerless to induce her to relax its self-imposed austerity."

I fell into a habit of waking at about one o'clock every morning, and I found that this state of coma had actually become of nightly recurrence.

I became too anxious to allow an affection of so formidable a kind to become incurably established without taking active measures for the restoration of my excellent wife.

Without a hint of my intention to her I made up my mind to consult Doctor Pelham, in whom I had implicit confidence, upon her case.

I was lucky. A chance would bring him by my house, on his way back to town, at about one o'clock the very next morning.

He would then make me a quiet visit, and he would see the patient, and consider the case carefully.

We were early people, and usually retired to bed at precisely ten o'clock. This night, however, I was obliged to take my place at the annual dinner of the Mutual Sustentation and Benefit Brotherhood, a sort of mutual insurance union of which I was a member, and sat on the committee.

I did not reach home till twelve o'clock. My wife, the servant told me, had gone to bed at her usual hour, and was quietly asleep. She knew nothing of my arrangement with Doctor Pelham.

I had been able to think of nothing else during our annual dinner. I could not say what mortal derangement of brain or heart the diagnosis of the doctor might disclose. I was now looking from the front sitting-room window across our little garden, now lighted brightly by the moon, to the road, eagerly watching for the arrival of the physician's carriage.

I grew more nervous as the moment approached. The clock struck one, and not very long after Doctor Pelham's brougham glided up to the little garden gate, and, leaving the hall-door open, I ran out to meet him at his carriage door, and to conduct him into the house.

Quietly we came in, he asking me a few questions as we did so. The hall-door was softly shut, and, at his request, I led him at once up to the patient's room.

There she lay, just as usual, in the same profound coma.

He felt her pulse. He stood by the side of the bed, candle in hand, and examined her face. He made me turn her in the bed, first on one side, and then on the other; then he made me shake her gently, then more briskly. Then he made me call her gently, then loudly, and finally I satisfied him that she was in a state of coma. He raised her eyelid, and looked at her eye, and stooped, as he did so, very close to her face. Then he stood again at the side of the bed, looking down on her, with his lips compressed and drawn down at the corners, and a hard frown, and he nodded once or twice as he was thinking.

"That will do," said he. "Let us go down."

I was very much alarmed; his face frightened me. I led him again to the front room.

"Is it anything very serious, doctor?" I asked, very much afraid of the answer that was coming.

"Serious enough," said he.

"But can't you do something for it?" I said.

"Nothing," he answered.

"Good Heaven! sir, what is it?" I exclaimed.

"You and your vicar may do her more good than I could," said Doctor Pelham.

"But what is it?" I exclaimed, in something bordering on distraction.

It had occurred to me that he thought it attributable to some malign spiritual agency, and he looked quite mysterious enough to mean anything.

He smiled faintly, and nodded, and looked out through the window for a moment, and then, turning to me with a little shrug, he said:

"I see there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in your philosophy. Have you read your Arabian Nights?"

"Genii?" I asked, thinking he meant thereby to indicate supernatural agency.

"You remember, then," he continued, "a story of a lady who had certain unaccountable peculiarities which puzzled her husband. He lay awake one night, pretending to be asleep, as usual; he watched her, saw her rise, and leave the room. He followed, keeping her in view, and tracked her to the tombs, where he saw her at her infernal repast, and discovered her to be a ghoul?"

"A ghoul!" I exclaimed.

"Now, in this case," he continued, "you must practise a similar stratagem. You must have nerve to follow it up."

"And what shall I see?" I said.

"Wonders," he replied.

"But what?" I insisted.

"Say nothing to put her on her guard, and your eyes will tell you that. I shan't say a word more on the subject. Good-night," he said, and went quickly to the hall-door.

I followed him, and tried to slip his fee into his hand as he passed me. But he peremptorily declined it; and repeating "Good-night," ran down the steps, through the garden, jumped into his carriage, and had driven away before I half recovered the stun of what he had said.

I took a long walk next day. I kept as much as possible out of my wife's way. The doctor's mysterious conduct had given me vague and secret misgivings about her; and a sense of the espionage I meditated, a duplicity imposed upon me as a matter of conscience, and such as I had never

practised before in all my life, combined to embarrass me in her presence.

I don't know whether it was fancy, but I thought her fine black eyes followed me about, with a steady but stealthy suspicion, all that evening, as if she were intuitively informed of the altered state of my thoughts, and knew, with a fearful anticipation, that light was about to break in upon me.

I did my best to appear unconcerned and easy. We played our short game of *écarté* as usual after tea. I read aloud a chapter of Miss Burney's charming novel of *Cecilia*, and then our portion of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, and, lastly, our accustomed chapter of the Bible.

I saw her look at me, as I did so, in a marked and suspicious way, and before we went up-stairs she asked a little abruptly:

"Are you quite well this evening, Jerry?"

I laughed (what a hypocrite I was becoming) as well as I was able, and assured her that nothing was amiss with me, that I never felt better, and only wished that she were half as well.

She seemed satisfied, and we went to rest.

It was my habit, ever since I had discovered her liability to the seizures which I have described, and which appeared to me since my secret interview with Doctor Pelham, the night before, unspeakably more awful than ever, to keep a light burning in the room all night. I was therefore furnished, without any departure from ordinary habits, with means and opportunity of observing all that should pass.

I affected to fall into a sound sleep; my wife appeared to me really to do so.

I continued to lie perfectly still, and to breathe long and deep as before. I began to feel unaccountably nervous.

At about a quarter to twelve my wife sat up in the bed, and looked at me. I had closed my eyes, except the least bit in life. She sat as still as a wax image, looking at me. Then she leaned over me and listened. Then softly and lightly she slid out of bed at the far side, without a sound, unlocked a press in the wall, and applied a black bottle to her lips.

I had risen, followed her round the bed with a noiseless tread on the thick carpet, and before she had made three great gulps from its contents, stretched my hand over her shoulder, and seized the bottle by the neck.

I wish she had screamed; I almost wish she had fainted; I don't know why, but

her silence and stillness shocked me. There she stood, looking up in my face, for she had cowered down a little, with a horrid deprecatory smile, and her face and lips as white as death.

I think I was as much horrified as she was. I felt positively freezing with horror.

"Give me that," I said, gently but firmly withdrawing the bottle from her hand. The smell told me what it was before I raised it, and read "best cognac brandy" on its scarlet and green label.

I peeped into the press, or rather closet, round which broad shelves ran. Whole regiments of empty bottles, similarly labelled, stood there beside some half-dozen next the door, with their seals unbroken. This I saw at a glance. My wife attempted a little swagger, and affected indignation, but it broke down. The case was too strong for her. She sat down on the side of the bed and cried: I cried also.

She said at last:

"I'll be a better wife in future to you, Jerry."

I kissed her, and we cried together a great deal.

Poor thing! She made a noble effort. She was very much changed after that. I used to see her looking at me when she thought I was not minding, and her fine eyes fill up with tears. I never alluded to the occurrence. There was good in her; and I think my forbearance touched her. Our good old vicar was often with her. She resisted bravely; and, thank Heaven, quite mastered her fault.

She was very affectionate, and seemed to wish to make amends, as if she owed me a great reparation. I told her never to think of it more. I reminded her that it was only to herself she had been unkind, and did my best to cheer and make her happy.

But I saw her looking at me as I have described; and sometimes she would turn away from me suddenly, and I knew she was in tears. She had quite lost her gaiety, and seemed to have some great care always upon her mind.

I took her away for change of scene to Rhyl. But she began to grow more melancholy, and talked as if she had no hope of heaven. The dejection of her mind afflicted me.

About six months after she was attacked with inflammation of the lungs. It was an unspeakable comfort to me that our good old vicar happened to be a visitor at Rhyl at that time. Before she died, for it was

her last illness, she became comparatively serene and hopeful.

My married life was of less than three years' duration, and I have never thought of marrying again. Thirty years have passed since the occurrence of the scene I have described, and there cannot remain to me many years more of my solitary sojourn on earth.

## THE CASE OF JOSIAH MORSE.

### CHAPTER IV.

It was a cruelly trying night for Mrs. Morse. It seemed endless. She thought the sun had forgotten to rise; that the day would never dawn. What a comfort it was to her to find the darkness yielding at last, ever so little; to see the outlines of the familiar objects about her grow gradually sharper and more defined; the shadows less obscure; the murky corners of the room, by slow degrees, relieved of the mysterious gloom, that had huddled and nestled there so many dreary, weary hours. The cold grey light of morning stole almost imperceptibly into the house. It was still dim and faint and cheerless enough, yet welcome to her, just as a few drops of the muddiest of ditch water are as a cordial to the parched lips of one left wounded on a battle-field.

Josiah was awake, yet wretchedly weak and unnerved. He permitted himself to be undressed and put to bed helplessly as a child. His wife lighted a fire, boiled a little kettle, and made him some tea. She could with difficulty persuade him to drink any of it. Then he turned on his side and slept again, groaning at intervals, and wrestling with his dreams.

She had been so busy watching and tending him, hastening to meet his every possible need, that she had hardly thought of what he had said, or the meaning of it, before he fainted. Perhaps she had forced herself not to think of it; or she was cherishing a hope that he had been talking wildly, at random, not knowing the significance of what he had said. That he had been—no, not drunk—she would not permit herself even now to conceive that possible of him—but so shaken and upset that he was not to be held accountable for his speech. He had been ill, very ill, that was all. Presently he would awake refreshed and calmer, and more himself, and would put away from him his idle utterances of overnight, perhaps forget them absolutely.

Soon he was stirring again, his hands

clutching the bed-clothes, his eyes sunken, dull, and wandering. His skin was sallow, dry, and wrinkled; his expression one of rather mindless alarm.

"Has the policeman come?" he inquired.

It was all true, then, Mrs. Morse said to herself. The tears rose to her eyes, and her heart sank within her grievously.

He was cooler and calmer, perhaps, although still very feeble. But he firmly adhered to the story he had told on his return from the City. He could tell it now more coherently, dwelling upon its details.

"There's no making the books right," he said; "the figures won't add up."

"Sums are so difficult sometimes," observed poor Mrs. Morse, simply, her mind recurring to girlish difficulties of her own with a slate and a long sum in compound addition.

"Thousands and thousands out, and I've taken them," he went on.

"You, Josh? But, my dear, we've never had the money."

He waved his hand impatiently.

"What was the name of that horse that came in third for the Derby?" he asked presently.

"I'm sure I don't know, dear," said his wife, with a bewildered air. "What does it matter what horses came in?"

"I can't think of it now. But that's how the mischief was done; that's where the money's gone. Sporting, betting, laying odds, and taking them. I don't know how I came to be going in for such games. But I did go in for 'em. I had a horror of them once. I never ventured but a shilling or so in a sweep before, and that wasn't because I cared for it, but just to oblige others, and for the fun of the thing. Fun? It's pretty fun I've come to now. Ruin, disgrace, beggary, penal servitude. That's what betting's brought me to."

"Try and go to sleep again, dear."

"Sleep? There's no more sleep for me, nor peace, nor comfort of any kind. I'm a regular bad one, that's what I am. I've robbed my employers. I've betrayed the trust reposed in me. I'm an out-and-out villain. It's all known and discovered. Morse, the forger, the embezzler, the thief. It will be all in the Newgate Calendar. Birth, parentage, education, crimes, and full confession of Josiah Morse, convict. They'll bring the shareholders' ledger into court. The judge and jury will look it all over. They'll see how the sham accounts were opened in fictitious names. The forged transfer deeds will be handed about. All

the frauds will be exposed. The duplicate share certificates will be discovered, and the forged dividend warrants and debentures. To think that I should be mixed up in such things! What would my poor old master, Mr. Piper—my first patron, that gave me my start in life—what would he say, I wonder, if he could only hear of it? It's enough to make him turn in his grave, poor, dear old gentleman. But I'll have done with it now. I'll go with the policeman to the station-house directly he's ready. Send for a pint of porter for him, my dear, and let him wait in the kitchen while I dress. I shall feel easier in my mind after I've told all to the sergeant, and he's entered the charge on the sheet in the regular way, and locked me up. He can handcuff me if he likes; not that I mean to give trouble."

He grew drowsy after this. Mrs. Morse slipped out of the house, and brought in, not a constable, but her doctor. He was her great ally, her most trusted friend and counsellor. It has been said that she was the mother of a large family. The doctor highly esteemed her, both as a patient and a woman.

But how much, how little should she tell him? Not surely all Josiah's wild and incredible revelations? No, that could not be. She hardly dared to think of them, much less to repeat them. To inform the doctor of all, to confide to him that her husband was, by his own confession, a felon, would be betrayal, might be dangerous. For the doctor might feel himself bound to communicate with the police, or might refuse to apply his healing art to a criminal so consummate. Mrs. Morse could form no estimate as to the conduct likely to be adopted by a respectable medical practitioner under such peculiar circumstances. So she simply said that her husband was very ailing, light-headed, she thought, and rambling in his speech; that she felt anxious about him, and would Doctor Block—she always called him "doctor," but, in truth, he was only a surgeon and apothecary, and boasted no physician's diploma—kindly come and see Josiah as soon as possible?

"Josiah ill?" said the doctor. "I thought it might be the baby. No return of croup, then? That's well. I'll come round directly. Light-headed is he? We can't allow that, you know, Mrs. Morse."

The doctor had a pleasant cheery manner, from which Mrs. Morse had derived the comfort as of a tonic in many trying moments of her life.

"Keep him in bed," said the doctor, after an interview with Josiah. "He's weak and feverish, and is evidently suffering under cerebral excitement." Mrs. Morse did not know exactly what that was, but she felt it was rather a grave malady. "Keep him warm and quiet, as quiet as possible. I'll send him round a cooling draught presently, and some pills to be taken at night. He may have anything he fancies, a mutton-chop if he can eat it, well done, without fat, and no potatoes. You'll be particular about that, Mrs. Morse? No malt liquor on any account. If he's thirsty, or seems faint, let him have a table-spoonful of brandy in a tumbler of water, hot or cold, as he prefers it, but without sugar. I'll look in again in the evening. And don't you give way, you know, Mrs. Morse. You must keep up, or how can we expect baby to thrive?"

Mrs. Morse promised, thus urged, that she would certainly do her best to keep up.

"He's light-headed, as you say," the doctor remarked presently, drawing on his gloves, and preparing to depart. "Do you think he's anything on his mind?" Her eyes lowered, and there was a twitch of pain in her face. "Ah, you don't know," he went on. "How should you? It's excessive fatigue; he's been over-working himself, as City men will do, saying nothing to their wives. Nothing more than that, I dare say. I'll be sure to look in again in the evening."

"I'd better, perhaps, send to his office to say he's ill, and they're not to expect him?" suggested Mrs. Morse.

"Well, yes, I suppose so." But the doctor seemed rather doubtful about the expediency of this course. "It's quite clear that he can't stir from his room to-day, nor for some days to come, I fear."

There was a curious expression upon Doctor Block's countenance as he turned from Pleasant-terrace.

"Foolish fellow," he muttered. "With a wife and all those young children! I should never have suspected him of such a thing. I knew he'd been hard up, but I thought he was doing very fairly again. It's ruin, of course. And I suppose they'll feel bound to prosecute."

It may be inferred that the doctor thought badly of the case of Josiah Morse.

"How do you feel now, dear?" Mrs. Morse inquired of her husband.

"My head's uncommon queer, but my mind's easier," he answered. "I told the doctor all. It was only right that he should

know. And I feel the better for it; the more people I tell of what's happened, the better I shall feel."

"It's all true, then!" said the poor wife, in a voice of anguish, her eyes filling with tears.

"Of course it's true. I'm all I said I was last night, and worse."

"Couldn't we—couldn't we run away, Josh?" she cried desperately.

"And leave the children?"

"We might take the baby."

"And be took by the detectives before we'd gone a mile. No, I plead guilty. They must do with me as they will—as the law directs. I deserve all I shall get, and more."

"I was going to send down to the office."

"Do, and tell them all. Tell them I admit everything, and am ready to be given in charge. I'd give myself in charge if I could only dress and get out for half an hour. I don't want to give trouble. Tell them so. It's all bad enough and wicked enough as it is. I'll do nothing to make it worse. Mind and say that."

Mrs. Morse contented herself, however, with despatching a brief note to the secretary of the railway company, stating the sudden illness of her husband, and his inability to appear at his office.

This composition cost her some pains. She was little experienced in efforts of the kind, and held the Great Company and its superior officers in extreme awe. Moreover, as she wrote, her hand was very tremulous, and her heart ached terribly.

#### CHAPTER V.

"To think it should come to this," she moaned, "after all we've gone through! I could not have believed it of Josh. I can't hardly believe it now. It was bad enough when there was no money coming in, when Josh was out of work, and it was all I could do to find even bread and dripping for the children. But now, when I thought we were getting on so well, when we were paying our way regularly, with something to spare, and Josh had a permanent situation and a good salary, better than he ever had before, to think that now this trouble should come upon us! But that's the way with trouble. It always comes when it's least expected. Why should he have taken the money? He had no need to. We owed nothing, and there was no extravagance. That can't be charged to me. I'm sure he was put to no expense he could not

afford easy with his means. And what's he done with the money? Flung it away in betting and such like? But that's not like Josh. He never was one to care for sporting and that. He despised it too much. I've heard him say so times and times. Still we never know how weak we are till we're tempted. My poor husband! He wasn't himself—he could not have been—when he took the money. They'd worked him to that extent, that he didn't know what he was doing. He couldn't have known. They'll never have the heart to deal hardly with him. And him a family man, with so many dependent on him! There isn't a soul in the neighbourhood that wouldn't come forward, and gladly, to speak to his respectability, and say a good word for him. Poor Josh! And what's to become of us all when he's took from us! Heaven only knows!"

She had no word of blame for her unfortunate husband: only deep love and the tenderest pity. He had cruel need of these now; for he was suffering acutely, it was clear, both in mind and body. It was not a time, and it was not for her at any time, to add to his tribulations. Rather let her, as best she might, help him to endure them.

Late at night a cab stopped in Pleasant-terrace. Could it be Doctor Block? Mrs. Morse asked herself. No, it was a spruce, nimble gentleman, who, tripping lightly from his vehicle, and flinging away a half-smoked cigar, knocked rather clamorously at the door. It was Mr. Adolphus Peck. It could be no one else. Mrs. Morse knew him at once, though she had never before seen him; but he had been described to her by Josiah over and over again. Mrs. Morse's anxiety and trepidation became extreme.

"Why, what's all this about Morse?" he asked, as he bowed politely, and, upon Mrs. Morse's invitation, stepped into the front parlour. So brightly attired a gentleman had probably never before entered that apartment. Mrs. Morse thought her furniture and decorations had never looked so shabby or so faded as they looked then. But he sat himself briskly down on the hard horse-hair coated sofa, deposited his shiny hat on the soiled table-cover, and drew from his white hands his tight, spotless, lavender-hued gloves, with a very cheerful and contented air, was "quite at home in a moment," as Mrs. Morse afterwards said. With a feeling of intense relief she perceived there was nothing minatory about his manner. He had not come, it

seemed plain at any rate, to drag Josiah incontinently to a jail.

"Mr. Peck, I think?" she said, timidly, rather to gain time, perhaps, for the collecting of her thoughts, the controlling of her feelings, than because she had any real doubts on the subject.

"Yes, certainly, that's my name," he replied. "Sorry to hear Morse is so poorly. Thought I'd just look round to inquire after him. He's better?"

"He's still very unwell, sir."

"Cold, I dare say. Or knocked up perhaps with overwork. He's had rather a bout of it lately, and he hasn't been looking very well I've noticed."

"No, sir, he hasn't, indeed; hasn't been what I may call himself, sir, for some time."

"Well, you must do the best you can, you know, Mrs. Morse; nurse him and tuck him up, and take care of him—that kind of thing. But you'll do all that, without my telling you, I'm quite sure."

Mrs. Morse said humbly that she hoped so.

"We shall be glad to have him back again I need not say. He's an excellent clerk, thoroughly trustworthy and industrious, and I hardly know—so put about as we are just now—how we shall be able to get on without him. But we must manage somehow. It's no use hurrying him, of course. Still, it's unfortunate, and just now we shall miss him dreadfully."

It was delightful to Mrs. Morse to learn that so much importance was attached to her Josiah's services, to hear him so praised and commended. Yet, did he deserve it all? she asked herself, with a cruel fluttering in her bosom. If Mr. Peck had only heard Josiah's confessions of overnight and that morning, would he not speak and think very differently of her unfortunate husband?

"My directors," said Mr. Peck "my directors, I need hardly say, will be disposed to show every consideration in the matter. Ample time will be allowed to Morse to recover from this illness. His salary will be paid just as usual. And he'll have his usual holiday. A rich company like ours can afford to deal generously with its officials. You've no need to be anxious on that score. And, talking of scores, how are the children, Mrs. Morse? You've a good many of them, I know."

Mrs. Morse quite blushed with gratification. What a nice, pleasant, affable gentleman he was! To think of his asking after the

children, just for all the world as any near neighbour or intimate friend might have done. Was this Josiah's master—a late member of the famous though now defunct firm of Piper and Co.—the dignitary whom she had held in such awe and reverence, the secretary of the company in whose service Josiah was a hard-working clerk? Why, he was now sitting in the parlour, talking to Mrs. Morse in that friendly way you'd have thought he'd been in the habit of sitting there night after night, and known Mrs. Morse the best part of his life! Why, he inquired the names and ages of all the children, and seemed to get these facts by heart and print them on his memory all in a minute, and asked particularly concerning the maladies incidental to infancy which they had or had not passed through! Yet he admitted that he was not himself a family man, and was not from personal experience acquainted with the comforts, to say nothing of the trials, of a home densely populated with offspring. And then how humorous he was!

"We must find room for all those young shavers—the boys I mean, Mrs. Morse—in the offices of the company, some of these fine days, as soon as ever they're tall and strong enough to sit safely on a high stool," he had laughingly said. "As for the girls—well, they're not so much in our way, perhaps; but—who knows? We may be able to set them working the telegraph. We shall have thousands of miles of telegraph, and there's some talk of a special cable under the Atlantic for our own use. We'll find room and work for them all, Mrs. Morse. Yes, and for as many more as you think proper to present to Mr. Morse and the company. Let there be no mistake about that."

And all the time he had kept his cab at the door, reckless of the extra fare he was incurring! This fact struck Mrs. Morse very much. Small extravagances, indeed, generally appeal strongly to the feminine mind.

"Can I see Morse?" he asked presently.

Mrs. Morse was at once, as it were, fetched down from heaven to earth. For the time she had forgotten all about Josiah's guilt. Recollection of it now came upon her like a sudden blow. If Josiah were to see the secretary and talk—and he was certain so to do—as he had talked last night! The thought was horrible. She turned very pale and trembled all over.

"Well, sir, you see he's very ill, and the doctor said he wasn't to be disturbed."

"Oh, I wouldn't stay a minute with him. I'll take care not to disturb him."

What was she to do? She was speechless, motionless. Yet she felt that at all costs she must prevent the meeting of Josiah and Mr. Peck.

At that moment Doctor Block entered. Mr. Peck was introduced to him, or introduced himself. Mrs. Morse was compelled to leave the two gentlemen together while she prepared the patient up-stairs for the visit of his medical attendant.

"So the poor fellow's really ill it seems?" said Mr. Peck.

The doctor replied with some hesitation and an air of uneasiness, "Yes. He's out of health. In a weak state. Suffering from over fatigue, I take it, with some symptoms of cerebral excitement.

"Brain fever?"

"Something of that kind. His mind is unsettled. At least, that is my opinion. I've only seen him once. But I understand that last night he was quite delirious."

"Indeed! Well, I remember now, he spoke rather strangely when I left him yesterday afternoon at four o'clock. I thought little of it at the time, but now it recurs to me."

"He spoke strangely did he?" asked the doctor, with some eagerness.

"Most certainly he did."

"May I ask—I do so, of course, solely with a view to the better understanding of his case from a medical point of view"—here the doctor rose and carefully closed the door—"may I ask the nature of the observations he addressed to you?"

"I was much occupied at the time, and did not pay very much attention. But now, putting this and that together, it is pretty clear to my mind that he was labouring under a delusion."

"A delusion in reference to——?" The doctor paused, and eyed his interlocutor curiously.

"In reference to the affairs of the company in whose service he is." Mr. Peck's calm, cool manner offered a striking contrast to a certain perturbed, anxious air which distinguished the medical man.

"And you feel satisfied that what he said was quite beside the mark, altogether groundless and inane, in point of fact?"

"I haven't a doubt of it."

"Would you mind stating more exactly, so far as you bear them in mind, the subjects he referred to?"

"I can only speak generally. But he made mention of some discrepancies he

had discovered, or that he believed he had discovered, in the accounts of the company."

"And none such exist?"

"Most certainly not. The notion is quite preposterous. As to that I am fully qualified to speak. Such a state of things could not possibly exist, I take it, without my being fully informed of it."

"And he made no distinct charge against any one in reference to these discrepancies?"

"No, not that I remember. But, as I said, I did not pay much attention. It was so clear that he was talking at random. Has he made any such charge since? For I may assume, I suppose, that he has been running on in much the same kind of way since he came home."

The doctor did not reply very directly. "He harps very much upon the affairs of the company he serves. His mind is strangely occupied with the subject. His conversation is rambling to incoherence. It seems to me that just now he is hardly to be held accountable for what he says or does. His brain is much disturbed."

"To speak quite plainly, you think the man mad?"

"I have not yet had an opportunity of forming a decided opinion as to the nature of his case. I would guard myself, therefore, from expressing much more than suspicion on the subject. But from what I have noticed, and, I may add, from what I have gathered from you, I am strongly inclined to think that the patient is suffering from derangement of the intellectual powers, or what we term dementia, of an acute rather than a chronic kind."

"Of course I'm not posted up in information of that sort; but you think him curable?"

"I've little doubt of it. In these cases careful diet, regular but not immoderate exercise, sea bathing when obtainable, tonics, anti-spasmodics, will do very much. But the main thing is the discovery and the removal of the exciting cause."

"Sometimes, I suppose, things go badly with the patient?"

"Sometimes, no doubt, the mania takes a violent form, and the case becomes critical."

"Thanks; much obliged, I'm sure. Most interesting. But I'll take my leave. Mrs. Morse is coming down-stairs. I won't detain her or you any longer. Glad to find that Morse—poor fellow!—is in such good hands. I shall look in again

shortly, and if we should find we want another opinion, we may as well have the consulting physician of the company down. He's bound to report upon the health of all our people, you know, so if you think it necessary, he can see poor Morse; not but what I'm sure you'll do all that needs to be done. Good-bye. Happy to have met you. Good-bye, Mrs. Morse. Hope the patient will soon be better."

And Mr. Peck, closing the street-door rather noisily behind him, and lighting a cigar as he stood on the steps, leaped into his cab, and was whirled away to western London.

"What a beastly neighbourhood," he observed, as he quitted Pleasant-terrace.

The doctor mounted the staircase that led to his patient's room.

"I hope I didn't say too much," muttered the doctor, stroking his chin thoughtfully. "And that the facts will bear me out. Anyhow, I did it for the best; not but what that's rarely a very good excuse."

#### CHAPTER VI.

"You think him better?" asked Mrs. Morse, her sad eyes up-turned piteously, trying hard to read some hint of hope, however faint and vague, in the doctor's hard, weather-battered face.

"He's no worse, I think. My good soul, don't give way so."

She had burst into tears, reeled a little, and but for Doctor Block's strong arm would probably have fallen.

"Thank Heaven, he's no worse!" she sobbed hysterically.

"But he wanders still a good deal, I find," said the doctor, presently.

"Yes, and he won't leave off. He's for ever adding up long columns of figures, calling over long lists of names, ticking off accounts with his finger-nails on the pillow-case. All over and over again. It's weary, weary work to listen to him. And then he seems to lose himself in his sums, and cries with vexation, and blames himself, and talks as you've heard him talk, doctor, and moans; it breaks my heart to hear him. But it can't be true, doctor, what he says. It can't be."

"No, no. At any rate we'll hope not, Mrs. Morse. Does he sleep?"

"But very little."

"The opiate had no effect, then? And his pulse is very rapid. Does he know you, or does he mistake you for any one else?"

"No. Thank God, it hasn't come to

that yet. He knows me for his poor, fond, suffering wife."

"He's not harsh in his manner, or suspicious, or fierce at all, is he? He blames you in no way?"

"No, bless him. He's the same to me he's always been. He's never said a cruel word to me, not really to mean it, all the long years we've been together. And he won't begin now. He's still my own dear husband, Josh."

"And he knows me. He's quite clear on that point. That looks well." And the doctor went on musingly. "Strange. No change in the moral character—no inversion of feeling. Recognises those about him. Regards them as he's always been in the habit of doing. What's the explanation of the case, then?"

The doctor was puzzled. Of course he did not admit as much. He was true to his profession. He determined that he would at any rate seem wise. Why should he invite distrust? That would not better the condition of things. So he continued to apply such remedies as occurred to him with a view to the improvement of his patient's general state of health.

"We must go on as we've been going," he said. "Rest, quiet, and as much comfort as we can manage. He's a good constitution, and nature will no doubt do a good deal for him. We must trust to nature, then." Only when a doctor talks about trusting to nature it is plain that he has lost faith somewhat in his own powers of healing.

The neighbours were very kind and considerate. They took charge, with a view to the completer pacification of the Morse household, of various of the Morse children. Detachments of these infant forces may be said to have been quartered at various posts in the district.

And Josiah improved in health; if slowly, still surely. He was able to sit up for an hour or two in the day, but he was very weak and helpless, and not sorry to be put back to bed again. He seemed shocked and surprised at his own feebleness—at the sudden prostration of his energies. He wanted to shave himself; but this his wife promptly forbade. Perhaps she feared to trust him with a razor, although in truth the poor fellow was so

reduced in strength that he could probably have wrought little harm with that implement either to himself or to others. A barber was called in, therefore, to shave Josiah and clip the fringe of hair he wore at the back of his head. His appearance was benefited by these proceedings, and, reclining in his easy-chair, wrapped in his wife's warmest tartan shawl, he now presented rather a striking figure.

He spoke but little. His facial expression was very vacant; his eyes lacked lustre more than ever; and there was a curious dragged look about the muscles of his mouth. He was like a man in a dream. But his dream was of a less distressing kind than before. Depressing it might be, but no longer acutely painful. He still counted on his fingers, called over names and addresses, mentally checked calculations, and added up long sums, always with the same result, grievously affecting the correctness of his employers' monetary affairs. But he no longer, Mrs. Morse reported, spoke of calling in a constable and giving himself into custody. Mrs. Morse inquired of the doctor whether her husband's forbearance in this respect was not a good sign? The doctor said it was undoubtedly. But he did not seem to give his opinion with very great confidence.

"I wish we could rouse him somehow," he said, rather vaguely. He perhaps perceived some difficulty in the way of rousing a man whom he also recommended should be kept perfectly quiet.

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